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REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated December 9, 2005. Claims 20-24, 26-27, and 30-35 are pending in the application. The Examiner rejected claims 20 and 23-26. Claims 21, 22 and 27 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten. Claims 20 and 27 have been amended. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the specification, and at least on page 15, lines 8-9 and page 16, lines 8-9. Claims 25, 28 and 29 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 30-35 have been added. Support for the new claims can be found throughout the specification and at least on page 7, lines 21-24, page 8, line 29, page 15, lines 20-23, page 16, lines 15-17, and page 19, lines 4-6. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the claims is requested.

Claim 25 was objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c). Claim 25 has been canceled.

Claim 27 was rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Claim 20 has been amended to correct the antecedent basis. The specification also states that "aortic wall" refers to both the wall of the aorta and the wall of the pulmonary artery. See page 7, lines 9-11. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claims 20 and 23-26 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Ross (5,089,015). The Examiner states that Ross discloses a method for attaching a stentless porcine heart valve prosthesis comprising inserting fasteners (sutures) through the prosthesis into an aortic wall.

Claim 20 has been amended to state that the fastener has a head and a tip. This is not shown in Ross. Ross utilizes suture as the fastener, and suture does not have a head and a tip. Thus, claim 20, as amended, is not anticipated by Ross since Ross does not include all of the claim limitations. Claims 23-26 are dependent from

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claim 20. These claims include all of the limitations of the base claims and recite additional features. Claims 23-26 also are not anticipated by Ross. Withdrawal of the 35 USC 102(b) rejection of claims 20 and 23-26 as being anticipated by Ross is requested.

Applicants filed an Information Disclosure Statement on December 3, 2003, but have not received notification that all of the references submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement have been considered and/or acknowledged. Applicants would appreciate receiving an initialed Form 1449 from the Examiner with the next Office communication.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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